

PROGRAM TEACHING PLAN—Arrah Vanier

Program Title The Ancestors Project

Discipline Visual Arts

Program Summary

Participants will research their ancestors, their stories, their life path , and themselves. The information gathered will be creatively assembled into a painted photo montage which honors the ancestor of their choice or themselves. Various presentational forms will be explored from oral exhibits, to slide show with voice over or music.

WEEK 1

Class Objective Class participants will explore their own definition of ancestor.
Participants will view various examples of art work done by artists in a slide show.
Participants will engage with introductory story telling.

Sequential Activities Today the big picture concept will be introduced. This is using a visual medium to tell a personal story. We will look at the works of John Littlefield, Jane Quick to See Smith, Romare Beardon, Faith Ringold, and others. In small groups, participants will create a small story collage to present to the group . The collage may be directed by random phrases drawn from a hat , or could be collaborative.

Social Engagement Activity/Activities **Ball Toss - Getting to Know You**
As the ball is tossed around the circle of participants , each will say his/her name , favorite food and favorite activity. As second time comes around , participant with the ball will be asked to remember who that person is with much help from other participants.

WEEK 2

Class Objective Participants will work with their own image . Participants will learn the photo montage technique.
Participants may work with color .

Sequential Activities Participants will have been photographed leaving session 1
Introduction to the photomontage technique. Participants will work with several sizes of their own image , as little me, ancestor me, now me in a playful way. Focus on story telling, placement on the page and the cutting and gluing technique.
Participants will decide who to incorporate into their stories for next week.

Social Engagement Activity/Activities **My most memorable child hood story.** Using a small box of simple child hood toys , each participant will approach the center of the circle to select an object to hold while they are recounting a story from their past. They will also be asked to associate a color or colors to this memory. Participants who listen , may ask questions.

WEEK 3

Class Objective Participants will learn about paint, color, and color mixing. Participants will learn how to apply paint, create textures, and handle a brush. Participants will begin to create a background design or structure for their ancestor piece.

Sequential Activities Participants will be introduced to the fundamentals of color theory, the emotional aspects of color as well as cultural aspects of color. Participants will experiment with color mixing. They will create a personal palette of colors that relate to their story. These colors will be applied to the background design for their ancestor art work. Designs will vary to fit their story.

Social Engagement Activity/Activities Participants will enter the circle by choosing a number out of a bowl. They will group up according to like numbers. Participants will share "The landscapes of my life, (interior, city, rural, structured, and the emotional colors of that remembrance).

WEEK 4

Class Objective Putting it all together. Participants will work on placing essential elements on the page. Participants will paint the designed background. Participants will look for or create other elements to enrich the story.

Sequential Activities We will explore how to create the center of interest and how to bring emphasis to an area. We will explore how overlapping can be used to create depth through space and time. We will look at the use of decorative story borders, and boundaries in the work. Participants will use their photomontage pieces to work out the composition that best fits their story.

Social Engagement Activity/Activities Eyes wide open. As participants enter the circle they will be handed a pen and small paper tablet. They will take a short amount of time to write out what they are learning from taking a look back on their life and ancestry. Participants who wish to may share with the circle. Words written here may appear in some form on the visual work itself.

WEEK 5

Class Objective Participants will assemble all parts of the work on the painted board surface . Participants will use various media for finishing techniques. Participants will have a clear sense of the finished work.

Sequential Activities This will be the big push week for the assembly of the piece. Mechanics of paint application, placement, gluing, and acrylic polymer mediums will be presented. We will look at the possibility of adding additional elements to the work, (words, ribbon, actual objects, memorabilia...)

Social Engagement Activity/Activities My biggest challenge. Participants will use the ball toss technique to verbalize their biggest challenge in regards to life and this work. Participants will use group support to overcome challenges.

WEEK 6

Class Objective Embellishment. Participants will use embellishment techniques to finish the art work.

Sequential Activities Participants will choose what they would like to use for finishing techniques. (gold pens, lettering , written script, decorative borders...)
Participants will work on writing an artist statement / story to accompany the art work.

Social Engagement Activity/Activities Participants will choose a colored slip of paper as they enter the circle. Small groups will assemble by color lots with their work. Groups will share their work and receive constructive criticism from others , or work on problem solving areas. Participants may also want to share the story. A work session will follow.

WEEK 7

Class Objective Presentation Practice. Participants will practice presenting their art works to the group, orally, with taped story, and or music.

Sequential Activities Participants will in turn display their work on an easel . Participants will practice presenting their finished work to the group. Members of the group will help in coaching , critiquing , and clapping . Participants will refine how they would like their work presented for next weeks culminating activity. Photographs will be taken of individual works for a slide show display during presentation.

Social Engagement Activity/Activities Participants will be invited to define and decide the environment and parameters of their culminating event. They may have an opening statement read in unison, a mode of dress, foods from their particular ancestry. Ideas will be charted out and voted upon by the group. Names and contacts of those who wish to will be exchanged at this time. Advertising and posters.

WEEK 8

Description of Culminating Event A room of the library will be dedicated to the evening event. Works will be hung along with titles and artist statements. The center will include a podium of sorts and a screen to display a digital image of the work in large scale. Food tables will be in the rear of the exhibit. Presenters will begin by greeting the seated audience as a group. They will open with some kind of monologue or written statement by the group. Each will present their story to the audience.